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The First Part of the

HISTORY

OF THE

KING and Cobler.

SHEWING

How King Henry VIII. used to visit the Watches in the City, his Acquaintance with a merry Cobler: How he was entertained in the Cobler's Cellar; and what had lik'd to befal them.

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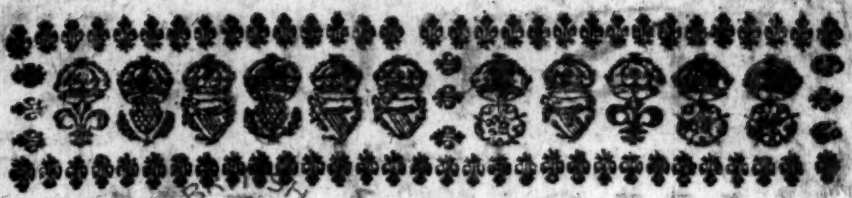

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE HISTORY Of the KING and Cobler:

CHAP I.

How King Henry *the Eight used to visit the Watches in the City, and how he came acquainted with a merry jovial Cobler.*

IT was the Costom of King *Henry* the Eighth, to walk late in the Night into the City disguised, to take Notice how the Constables and Watch perform'd their Duty, not only in carefully guarding the City Gates, but also dilligently watching the inward Parts of the City, that so they might prevent those Disturbances and Casualties which often happen in great and populous Cities in the Night. This he did oftentimes without the least Discovery who he was, returning home to *Whitehall*, early in the Morning. Now in his Return home through the *Strand*, he took Notice of a certain Cobler, who was constantly up at Work, whistling and singing every Morning; he

he reſolved to ſee him, and to be acquainted with him; in order to which, he immediately knock't off the Heel of his Shoe, by hitting it againſt a ſtone; having ſo done, he bounc'd at the Cobler's Stall.

Who's there? Cries the Cobler.

Here's one, ſaid the King.

With that the Cobler open'd the Stall Door, and the King ask'd him if he could ſet on his Heel?

Yes that I can, ſays the Cobler, *come in honeſt Fellow, and ſit thee down by me, and I will do it for thee ſtraight.* The Cobler ſcraped his Awls and old Shoes to one Side, to make Room for the King to ſit by him.

The King being hardly able to forbear laughing at the Kindneſs of the Cobler, ask'd him, if there was not an Houſe hard by which ſold a Cup of Ale, and the People were up.

Yea, ſaid the Cobler, there is an Inn over the Way, where I believe the Folks are up, for the Carriers go from thence very early in the Morning.

With that the King borrow'd an old Shoe of the Cobler, and went over to the Inn, deſiring the Cobler to bring his Shoe to him thither ſo ſoon as he had put the Heel on again; the Cobler promis'd he would, ſo making what haſte he could to put the Heel on, he carried it over to the King, ſaying.

Honeſt Blade, here is thy Shoe again; I'll warrant thee it will not come off again in haſte.

Very well, ſaid the King, what muſt you have for your Pains ?

A Couple of Pence, anſwered the Cobler.

Well, (ſaid the Kind) ſeeing thou art an honeſt merry Fellow, here's a Teaſter for thee come, ſit thee down by me, I will drink a full pot with thee : Come, here's a good Health to the King.

" With all my *Heart*, (ſaid the Cobler) I will " pledge thee were it in Water".

So the Cobler ſat down by the King, and was very merry, and drank of his Liquor very freely : He alſo ſung ſome of his merry Songs and Catches, whereat the King laugh'd heartily, and was very pleaſant and jocund with the Cobler telling him withal, that his Name was *Hary Tudor*, and that he belonged to the Court ; and if he would come and ſee him there, he would make him very welcome, becauſe he was ſuch merry Company ; and charged him to be there, and not to forget his Name, and to ask any one for him about the Court, and they would bring him to him : For (ſaid the King) I am very well known there.

Now the Cobler little dream'd that he was the King which ſpoke to him, much leſs that the King's Name was *Hary Tudor* ; therefore with a great deal of Confidence he ſtands up, and pulls off his Hat, and makes two or three Scrapes with his Leg, and gives the King many Thanks ; alſo telling him, that he was one of the honeſteſt Fellows he ever met with in all his Lifetime ; and though he had never been at Court, yet it ſhould

not

not be long before he would make a Holy-day come and see him.

Whereupon the King discharging the House for what they had drank, would have taken his Leave from the Cobler.

But the Cobler being not willing to part with the King, took him by the Hand, and said, *By my Faith, you must not go yet: You shall first go and see my poor Habitation: I have there a Tub of good brown Ale, that was never tapp'd yet; you must needs go and taste of it, for you are the honestest Blade that I ever met withal; and I love an honest merry Companion with all my Heart.*

CHAP. II.

How the Cobler entertained the King in his Cellar; and of the Desturbance they'd like to have had by the Cobler's Wife Joan.

SO the Cobler took the King with him over the Way, where he had a Cellar adjoining to the Stall, which was handsomely and neatly furnished for a Man of his Profession; into his Cellar he had the King: There (said he) sit down, you are welcome; but I must desire you to speak softly; for fear of waking my Wife *Joan*, who lies here hard by (shewing the King a close Bed made neatly up at the one Corner of the Cellar,

Cellar, much like unto a Closet, for if she should awake, she will make your Ears ding again.

At which Speech of the Cobler's the King laughed, and told him he would be mindful to observe his Directions.

Whereupon the Cobler kindled a Fire, and fetch'd out a brown Loaf, from which he cut a lusty Toast, which he set a baking at the Fire; then he brought out his *Cheshire* Cheese, come said he, will you eat some *Cheshire* Cheese. There is as good Fellowship in Eating as there is in Drinking.

Which made the King admire the honest Freedom of the Cobler; So having eaten a Bit, the Cobler began a Health to all true Hearts and merry Companions; at which the King smiled, saying, *God a Mercy Friend, I'll pledge you.*

In this Manner they eat together, until it was almost Break of Day. The Cobler being very free of his Liquor, and delighting the King with several of his old Stories, insomuch that the King was very highly pleased with the Manner of the Cobler's Entertainment; when on a Sudden the Cobler's *Wife Joan* began to awake: *I faith* (says the Cobler) *you must be gone, my Wife* Joan *begins to grumble, she will awake presently, and I would not for half the Shoes in my Shop she should find you here.*

So taking the King by the Hand, he led him up Stairs, saying, *Farewel, honest Blade; it shall not be long before I make a Holy-day, and come to see thee at Court.*

You

You shall be kindly welcome, replied the King.

So they parted, the King on his Way to *Whitehall*, and the Cobler to his Sellar, and there putting all Things to Rights before his Wife *Joan* got up, went to Work again whistling and singing as merrily as he us'd to do; being much satisfied that he happened on so good and jovial a Companion, still carressing himself in his Thoughts, how merry he should be when he came to Court.

CHAP. III.

How the Cobler prepared himself to go to the Court, and how he was set out, after the best Manner, by his Wife Joan.

NOW as soon as the King came home, he sent Orders out about the Court, that if any one enquired for him by the Name of *Harry Tudor*, they should immediately bring the Person before him, whatever he was, without any further Examination of him. Now the Cobler thought every Day a Month, till he had been at Court to see his new Acquaintance, and was much troubled how he should get Leave of his Wife *Joan*: For he could not go without her Knowledge, by Reason he did resolve to make himself as fine as he could; for his Wife always keept the Keys of his Holy-day Cloaths. Whereupon one Evening as they sat at Supper, find-

finding her in a very good Humour, he began to lay open his Mind to her, telling her the whole Story of their Acquaintance, repeating it over and over again, That he was the honeſteſt Fellow that ever he met withal. Husband, quoth ſhe, becauſe you have been ſo ingenuous to tell me the whole Truth, I will give you Leave to make a Holy-day for this once; you ſhall go to the Court, and I will make you as fine as I can.

So it was agreed that he ſhould go the next Day; whereupon *Joan* roſe betimes the next Morning, to bruſh up her Husband's Holy-day Claoths, and ſo make him as ſnug as ſhe could; ſhe waſhed and iron'd the Lace-band, and made his Shoes ſhine, that he might ſee his Face in them. Having done this, ſhe made her Husband to riſe and pull off his Shirt, then ſhe waſhed him with warm Water from Head to Foot, putting on him a clean Shift, afterwards ſhe dreſs'd him in his Holy-day Cloaths, pinning his lac'd Band in prim.

CHAP. IV.

The Cobler's Reception at Court, with the Manner of his Behaviour before the King.

THE Cobler being thus ſet forth, ſtrutted through the Streets, like a Crow in a Gutter, thinking himſelf as fine as the beſt of them

them all. In this Manner he came to Court, ſtaring on this Body and on that Body, as he walked up and down, and not knowing who to ask for *Hary Tudor*, at laſt he eſpyed one, as he thought in the habit of a Serving man, to him he made his Addreſs, ſaying.

Doſt thou hear, honeſt Fellow? Do you know one Hary Tudor, *which belongs to the Court?*

Yes, ſaid the Man, follow me, and I will bring you to him.

With that he had him preſently up into the Guard-Chamber, telling one of the Yeomen of the Guard, there was one that enquired for *Hary Tudor.*

Replied the Yeoman, I know him very well; if you will pleaſe to go along with me, I will bring you to him immediately.

So the Cobler followed the Yeoman, much admiring the Finery of the Rooms he went through; he thought within himſelf, that the Yeoman was miſtaken in the Perſon whom he enquir'd after: *For*, ſaid he, *him who I look for, is a plain merry honeſt Fellow, his Name is* Hary Tudor, *we drank two Pots together not long ſince, I ſuppoſe he may belong to ſome Lord or other about the Court.*

I tell you Friend, replyed the Yeoman, I know him very well; do you but follow me, and I ſhall bring him to you ſtraight.

So going forward, he came to the Room where the King was, accompanied with ſeveral of the Nobles who attended him.

As

As ſoon as the Yeoman had put by the Arras, he ſpake aloud, ſaying, *May it pleaſe your Majeſty, here is one that enquires for* Hary Tudor.

The Cobler hearing this, thought he had committed no leſs than Treaſon; therefore he up with his Heels, and run for it; but not being acquainted with the ſeveral Turnings and Rooms thro' which he came, he was ſoon over-taken and brought before the King, whom the Cobler little thought to be the Perſon he enquired after. Therefore, in a trembling Condition, he fell down upon his Knees, ſaying,

May it pleaſe your Grace, may it pleaſe your Highneſs, I am a poor Cobler, and enquired for one Hary Tudor, *who is a very honeſt Fellow: I mended the Heel of his Shoe not long ſince, for which he paid me nobly, and gave me two Pots to boot; but I had him over afterwards to my Cellar, where we drank part of a Cup of nappy Ale, and was very merry, until my Wife* Joan *began to grumble, which put an End to our Merriment for that Time, but I told him, I would come to the Court and ſee him, as ſoon as conveniently I could.*

Well ſaid the King, be not troubled; do you know this honeſt Fellow again, if you ſee him?

The Cobler replyed, *Yes, that I do from a Thouſand.*

Then ſaid the King, Stand up, and be not afraid, but look well about you, peradventure you may find the Fellow in this Company.

Whereupon the Cobler aroſe, and looked wiſhfully upon the King, and the Reſt of his Nobles, but

but to little or no Purpoſe; for though he ſaw ſomething in the King's Face, which he thought he had ſeen before, yet he could not imagine him to be *Hary Tudor*, whoſe Heel of his Shoe he had mended, and who had been ſo merry with him, both at the Inn, and at his own Cellar.

He therefore told the King, "He did not expect to find *Hary Tudor* among ſuch fine Folks as he ſaw there, but that the Perſon he looked for was a plain, honeſt, and true hearted Fellow. *Adding withal*, That he was ſure that did *Henry Tudor* but know that he was come to Court, he would make him very welcome".

At which Speech of the Cobler's, the King had much ado to forbear laughing out-right; but keeping his Countenance as ſteady as he could; he ſpoke to the Yeoman of the Guard.

Here, ſaith he, *Take this honeſt Cobler down into my Cellar, and let him drink my good Health: I will give Orders that* Hary Tudor *ſhall come to him preſently.*

So away they went, the Cobler ready to leap out of his Skin for Joy, not only that he had come ſo well off, but alſo that he ſhould find his Friend *Hary Tudor*.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Cobler's Entertainment in the King's Cellar: How he met with his new Friend Hary Tudor, *and how he came to know him to be the King.*

THE Cobler had not been long in the King's Cellar, before the King came to him in the ſame *Habit* he had on when the Cobler mended his *Shoe*; whereupon the Cobler knew him, and ran and kiſſed him, ſaying.

" *Honeſt Hary*, I have made an Holy-day, on " purpoſe to ſee you; but I had much ado to get " Leave of my Wife *Joan*, who was loath that " I ſhould looſe ſo much Time from my Work, " but I was reſolved to ſee you: I therefore made " my ſelf as fine as I could. But I'll tell you, " *Hary*, when I came to the Court, I was in a Peck " of Troubles how to find you out; but at laſt I " met with a Man, who told me he knew you very " well, and that he would bring me to you; but " inſtead of doing ſo, he brought me before the " King, which had almoſt frighted me out of my " ſeven Senſes; but in good Faith, *added the Cobler*, " I am reſolved to be merry with you, ſince I " have had the good Fortune of meeting with you " at laſt".

Ay, that you ſhall, reply'd the King, we'll be as merry as Princes.

With

With that he called for a large Glaſs of Wine and drank to the Cobler, the King's good *Health*.

God a Mercy, ſaid the Cobler, *honeſt Hary, I will pledge thee with all my Heart.*

Now after the Cobler drank about four or five good *Healths*, he began to be merry, and fell a ſinging his old Songs and Catches, which pleaſed the King very much, and made him laugh heartily. When on a ſudden, ſeveral of the Nobles came into the Cellar, extaordinary rich in Apparel, who ſtood bare to *Hary Tudor*, which put the Cobler into a great Amazement at firſt; but recovering himſelf, he looked more wiſhfully upon *Hary Tudor*, when preſently he knew him to be the King, whom he ſaw in the Preſence-Chamber, though in another *Habit*; he immediately fell upon his Knees, ſaying.

May it pleaſe your Grace, your Highneſs, I am an honeſt poor Cobler, and mean no Harm.

No, no, ſaid the King nor ſhall receive none here. *He* commanded him therefore to riſe up and be as merry as he was before; and though he knew him to be the King; yet he ſhould uſe the ſame Freedom with him as he did before, when he mended the *Heel* of his Shoe.

This kind Speech of the King's, and three or four Glaſſes of Wine more, made the Cobler to be in as good *Humour* as he was before, telling the King ſeveral of his pretty Stories, and ſinging ſome of his beſt Songs, very much to the Satisfaction of the King and all his Nobles.

The

The Cobler's Song in the KING'S *Cellar.*

To the Tune of *Jenny Gin*, &c.

COME let us drink the other Pot,
Our Sorrows to confound;
We'll laugh and ſing before the King,
So let his Health go round:
For I am as bold as bold can be,
No Cobler e'er was ruder;
Then here good Fellow, here's to thee,
Remem'bring *Hary Tudor.*

When I'm at Work within my Stall,
Upon him I ſhall think;
His Kindneſs I to Mind will call,
When e'er I eat or drink;
His Kindneſs was to me ſo great,
The like was never known;
His Kindneſs I will ſtill repeat,
And ſo ſhall my Wife *Joan.*
I'll laugh when I ſit in my Stall,
And merrily will ſing,
That I with my poor Laſt and Awl,
Am Fellow with a King:
But it is more, I muſt confeſs,
Than I at firſt did know,
But *Hary Tudor* ne'ertheleſs,
Reſolves it ſhould be ſo.

And now farewel unto *Whitehall*,
I homeward muſt retire;
To ſing and whiſtle in my Stall,
My *Joan* will me deſire:
I do but think how ſhe will laugh,
When ſhe hears of this Thing;
How he that drunk her Nut brown Ale:
Was *England*'s Royal King.

CHAP VII.

How the Cobler became a Courtier.

NOW the King conſidering the pleaſant Humour of the Cobler, how innocently merry he was, and free from any Deſigns; that was a Perſon that laboured very hard, and took a great Deal of Pains for a ſmall Livelihood; was pleaſed, out of his Princely Grace and Favour, to allow him a liberal Annuity of Forty Marks a Year, for the better Support of his jolly Humour, and the Maintenance of his Wife *Joan*, and that he ſhould be admitted one of his Courtiers, and that he might have Freedom of his Cellar when ever he pleaſed: Which being ſo much beyond Expectation, did highly exalt the Cobler's Humour, much to the Satisfaction of the King.

So after a great many Legs and Scrapes, he returned Home to his Wife *Joan*; with the joyful

ful News of his Reception at the Court, which so well pleased her, that she did not think much at the great Pains she took in tricking him up for the Journey.

N. B. In the *Second* PART, you have a further Account of the *Cobler's* Return to his *Wife Joan*, and of the comical Discourse that past between them; and how the *Cobler* returning to *Court*, the Queen got Notice of the Diversion he gave to the King and *Courtiers*, was resolved to be a Partaker of his Merriment; and how he was kept the Remainder of his Days about the *Court*, *&c.* with many other Things worthy of your Attention.

FINIS.

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